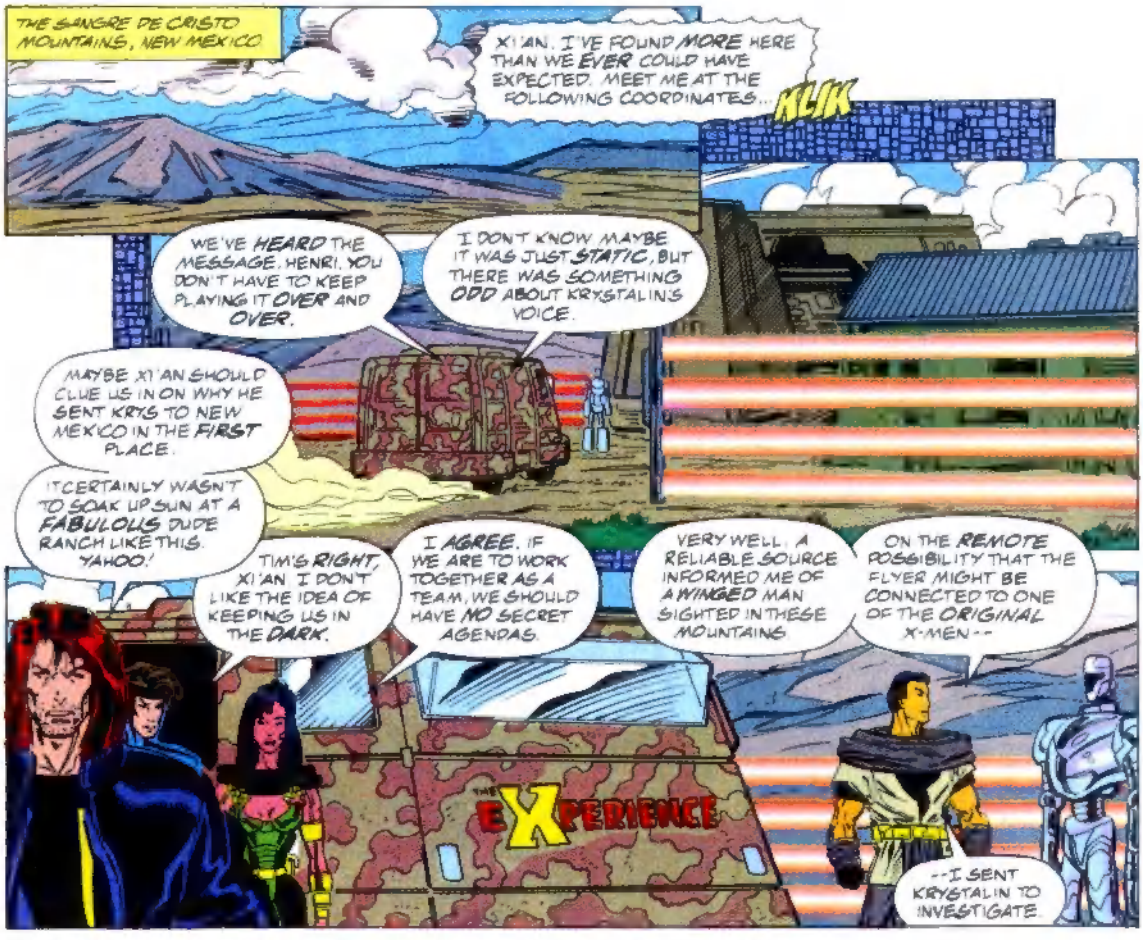
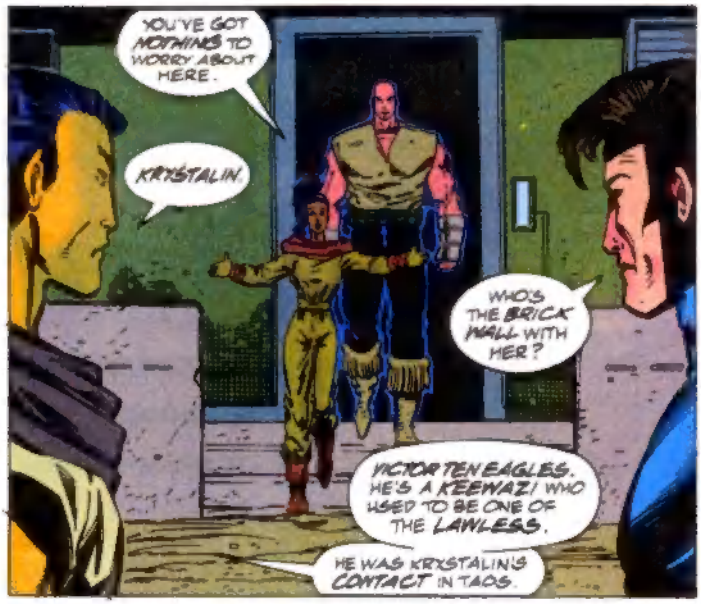
MARVEL COMICS
X-MEN 2099
$1.50 US
$2.05 CAN
9
JUN
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE SECRET OF
XI'AN
DIRECT EDITION


THE SANGRE DE CRISTO MOUNTAINS, NEW MEXICO
XI'AN, I'VE FOUND MORE HERE THAN WE EVER COULD HAVE EXPECTED. MEET ME AT THE FOLLOWING COORDINATES...
KLIK
WE'VE HEARD THE MESSAGE, HENRI. YOU DON'T HAVE TO KEEP PLAYING IT OVER AND OVER.
I DON'T KNOW. MAYBE IT WAS JUST STATIC, BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING ODD ABOUT KRYSTALIN'S VOICE.
MAYBE XI'AN SHOULD CLUE US IN ON WHY HE SENT KRYS TO NEW MEXICO IN THE FIRST PLACE.
IT CERTAINLY WASN'T TO SOAK UP SUN AT A FABULOUS DUDE RANCH LIKE THIS. YAHOO!
TIM'S RIGHT, XI'AN. I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF KEEPING US IN THE DARK.
I AGREE. IF WE ARE TO WORK TOGETHER AS A TEAM, WE SHOULD HAVE NO SECRET AGENDAS.
VERY WELL. A RELIABLE SOURCE INFORMED ME OF A WINGED MAN SIGHTED IN THESE MOUNTAINS
ON THE REMOTE POSSIBILITY THAT THE FLYER MIGHT BE CONNECTED TO ONE OF THE ORIGINAL X-MEN--
THE EXPERIENCE
--I SENT KRYSTALIN TO INVESTIGATE.

LOOKS LIKE ALL KRYS FOUND WAS BUNCH OF RUSTY SECURITY 'BOTS.
WARNING. WARNING. DANGER. DANGER.
SKWEEK
SKWEEK
HENRI, SWEEP THE RANCH GROUNDS, AND SCOPE THE SECURITY LAYOUT.
IF YOU FIND KRYS BRING HER TO ME.
GOTCHA.
THERE'S NO NEED TO BE SO SUSPICIOUS.

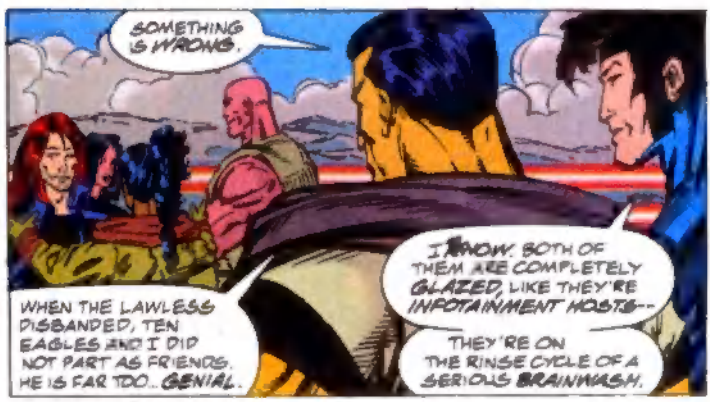
X-MEN 2099 * Vol. 1, No. 9, June, 1994. Published by MARVEL COMICS. Terry Stewart, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Group Vice President, Publishing. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, NY 10016. Application to mail at second class postage rates is pending at New York, N. Y. and at additional mailing offices. Published monthly. Copyright © 1994 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price $1.50 per copy in the U.S. and $2.05 in Canada. Subscription rate for 12 issues: $18.00 U.S., $30.00 foreign and Canadian subscribers must add $10.00 for postage and GST. GST # R127932852. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. X-MEN 2099 (including all prominent characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof) is a trademark of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO X-MEN 2099, c/o MARVEL DIRECT MARKETING CORP. SUBSCRIPTION DEPT. P.O. BOX 1979, DANBURY, CT. 06813-1979. TELEPHONE # (203) 743-5231. PRINTED IN USA.


YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT HERE.
KRYSTALIN.
WHO'S THE BRICK WALL WITH HER?
VICTOR TEN EAGLES. HE'S A KEEWAZI WHO USED TO BE ONE OF THE LAWLESS.
HE WAS KRYSTALIN'S CONTACT IN TAOS.

HENRI, I'M SO VERY PLEASED YOU'RE HERE. I'VE SO SO MUCH TO SHARE WITH YOU.
KRYS, WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU DON'T SOUND LIKE YOURSELF.
DON'T BE SILLY. I'VE NEVER BEEN BETTER.

XI'AN. IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG, MY BROTHER.
DESTINY HAS BROUGHT US TOGETHER ONCE AGAIN.
TEN EAGLES, DID YOU AND KRYSTALIN FIND THE "ANGEL" YOU SIGHTED? IS HE HERE?
BE PATIENT, MY FRIEND.
FIRST, THERE IS SOMEONE YOU ALL MUST MEET.

REALITY CHECK, SHAKTI. AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO THINKS KRYS IS ACTING LIKE A ZOMBIE?
THIS IS ONE OF THE TIMES WHEN I WISH MY ABILITIES INCLUDED TELEPATHY.
EXCUSE ME, HENRI, I MUST TELL THE OTHERS ABOUT THE WONDERFUL FUTURE IN STORE FOR US ALL.
RIGHT...

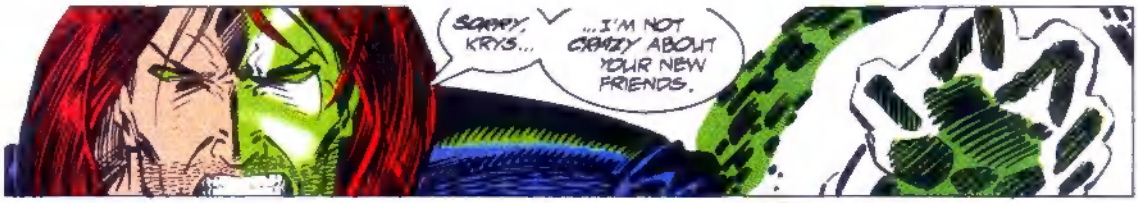

SOMETHING IS WRONG.
I KNOW. BOTH OF THEM ARE COMPLETELY GLAZED, LIKE THEY'RE INFOTAINMENT HOSTS--
WHEN THE LAWLESS DISBANDED, TEN EAGLES AND I DID NOT PART AS FRIENDS. HE IS FAR TOO... GENIAL.
THEY'RE ON THE RINSE CYCLE OF A SERIOUS BRAINWASH.

YOUR FRIENDS HAVE MERELY SEEN THE LIGHT--
--AS EVENTUALLY, YOU WILL TOO.

BRAND X
MASTER ZHAO BIDS YOU WELCOME, MUTANTS!
I HAVE BROUGHT YOU HERE TO JOIN ME IN THE GENETIC CRUSADE TO COME
YOU WILL BE MY HOLY WARRIORS--
--MY X-MEN!
JOHN FRANCIS MOORE WRITER
RON LIM PENCILER
JAMES SANDERS III INKER
LOPEZ & DUTRO LETTERER
TOM SMITH COLORIST
JOEY CAVALIERI EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF

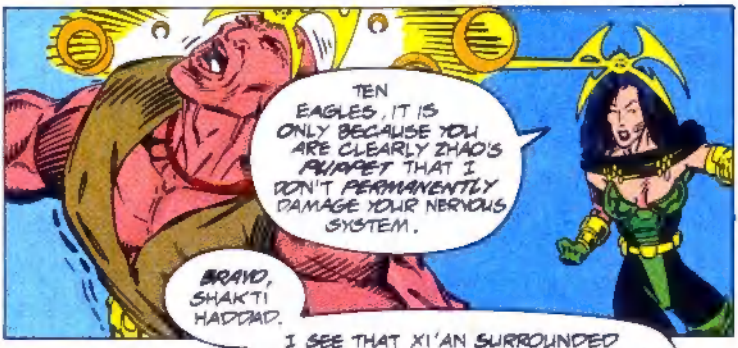
YOUR X-MEN?
I THOUGHT THAT THE ZHAO, WHOSE X-MEN FOUGHT DURING THE CORPORATE WARS, DIED IN THE LOS ANGELES FIRESTORM.
LOOK AT ME, XI'AN CHI'XAN.
CAN YOU DOUBT THAT I AM THE MASTER OF MINDFIRE?
I HAVE SURVIVED THESE MANY YEARS TO LEAD A NEW GENERATION OF MUTANTS TO THEIR RIGHTFUL DESTINY.
THESE ARE THE FIRST OF MY CHOSEN. MONSTER. WINGSPAN. FROSTBITE. PSYCHO K. ONE EYED JACK.
MY GENETIC EMPATHY TELLS ME ALL SIX ARE GENUINE MUTANTS, XI'AN.
NET FLASH FOLKS, WE'VE BEEN SURROUNDED.
I'LL TAKE THE THREE ARMED RASTA.
I'LL HIT THE FLYER.
USE CAUTION. WE DON'T KNOW THE EXTENT OF THEIR ABILITIES.
RELAX, MY FRIENDS, NO ONE HERE MEANS YOU ANY HARM.
ZHAO ONLY WANTS WHAT'S BEST FOR HIS FOLLOWERS.
THAT IS WHY WE ARE TO BE PART OF THE CHOSEN.
THE CHOSEN?
DO NOT BE SO PROTECTIVE, XI'AN.
YOU HAVE DONE WELL IN BRINGING THIS DISPARATE BAND OF MUTANTS TOGETHER.
BUT YOU HAVE NEITHER THE EXPERIENCE NOR WISDOM TO LEAD THEM THROUGH THE COMING STORM.
DO NOT LET YOUR EGO STAND IN THE WAY OF THE TRUTH.
ACKNOWLEDGE ME AS YOUR LEADER.

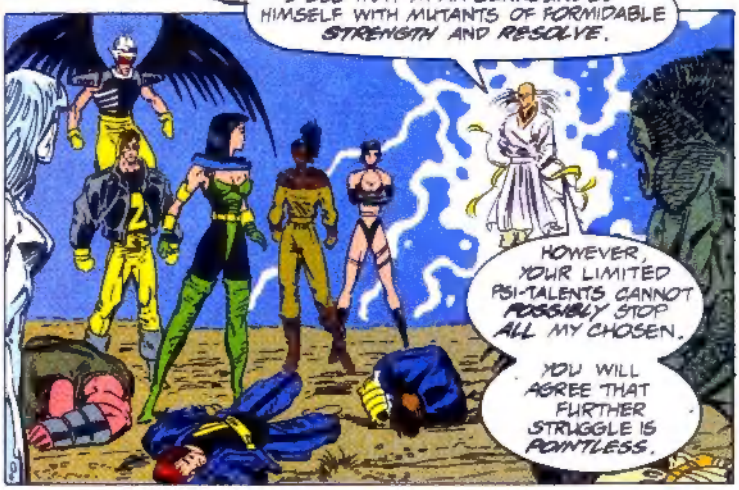
DO YOU THINK I WOULD BLINDLY SURRENDER MY FRIENDS TO YOU, ZHAO--
--AFTER WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO KRYSTALIN AND TEN EAGLES.
RELEASE THEM FROM WHATEVER MIND CONTROL THEY'RE UNDER OR--
ARRRGHH!
INSOLENT CHILD!
NO ONE SPEAKS TO MASTER ZHAO IN THAT MANNER.
I'VE BURIED BETTER MUTANTS THAN YOU, UPSTART.
THE PSYCHIC ENERGIES OF MY MINDFIRE CAN HURT YOU EXTERNALLY AND INTERNALLY.
I COULD REND YOUR MIND AND BODY TO PIECES IF I SO DESIRED.
I HOPE I HAVE MADE MY POINT CLEAR.
FITZ, LET'S GO--
KRYSTALIN.
PWUNK
--NNUIRRKK--


SORRY, KRYS...
...I'M NOT CRAZY ABOUT YOUR NEW FRIENDS.

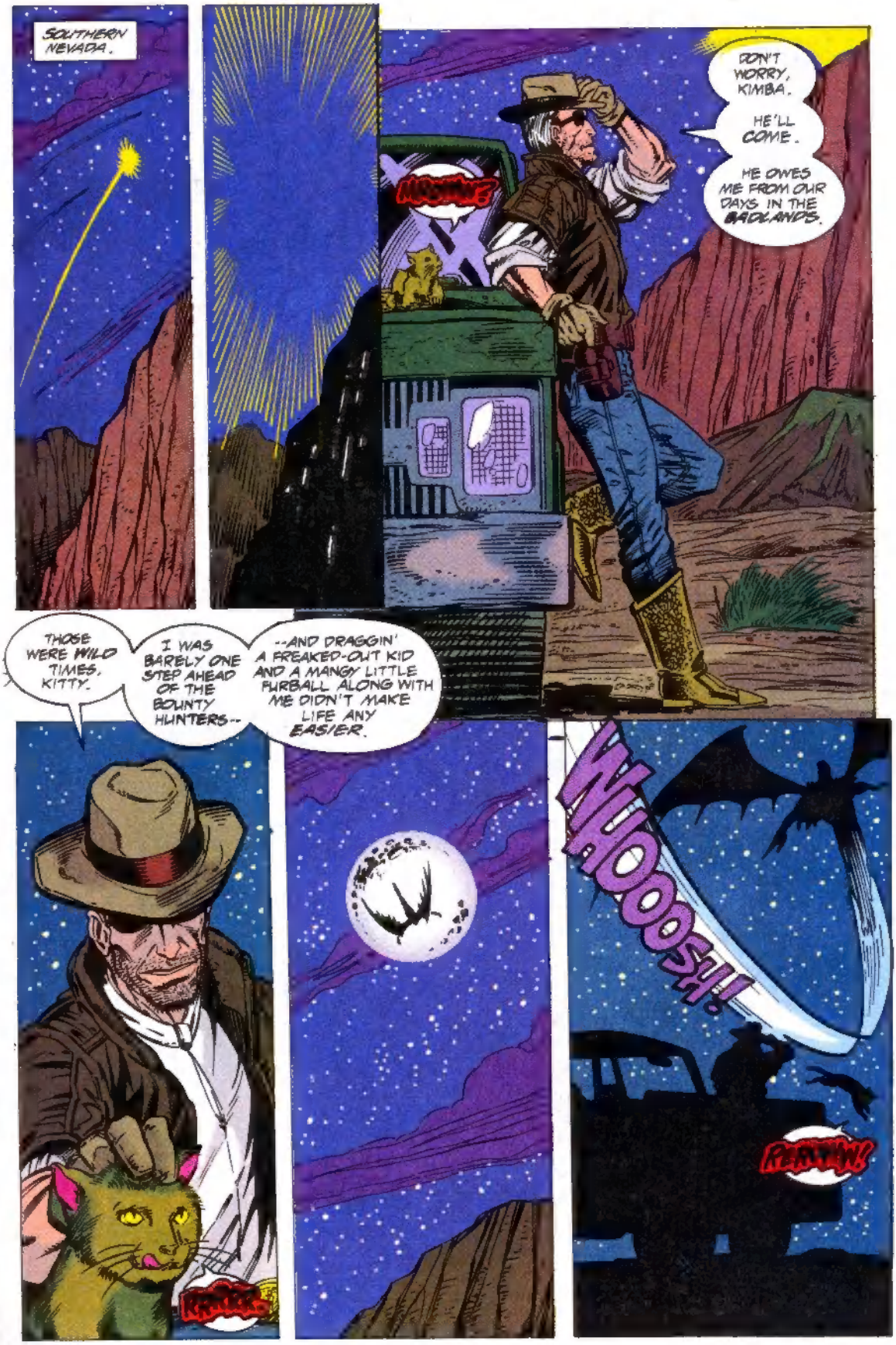
KLANG
WHOMP
CAN'T YOU SEE THAT WHAT WE DO HERE IS FOR YOUR OWN BENEFIT?

MASTER ZHAO IS A MAN OF GREAT WISDOM AND INFINITE COMPASSION. BE THANKFUL HE HAS CHOSEN YOU TO PLAY A PART IN THE GLORIOUS DAYS TO COME.
WHOMP


TEN EAGLES, IT IS ONLY BECAUSE YOU ARE CLEARLY ZHAO'S PUPPET THAT I DON'T PERMANENTLY DAMAGE YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM.
BRAVO, SHAK'TI HADDAD.


I SEE THAT XI'AN SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH MUTANTS OF FORMIDABLE STRENGTH AND RESOLVE.
HOWEVER, YOUR LIMITED PSI-TALENTS CANNOT POSSIBLY STOP ALL MY CHOSEN.
YOU WILL AGREE THAT FURTHER STRUGGLE IS POINTLESS.

YES.


SOUTHERN NEVADA.
DON'T WORRY, KIMBA.
HE'LL COME.
HE OWES ME FROM OUR DAYS IN THE BADLANDS.
THOSE WERE WILD TIMES, KITTY.
I WAS BARELY ONE STEP AHEAD OF THE BOUNTY HUNTERS--
--AND DRAGGIN' A FREAKED-OUT KID AND A MANGY LITTLE FURBALL ALONG WITH ME DIDN'T MAKE LIFE ANY EASIER.
WHOOOSH!

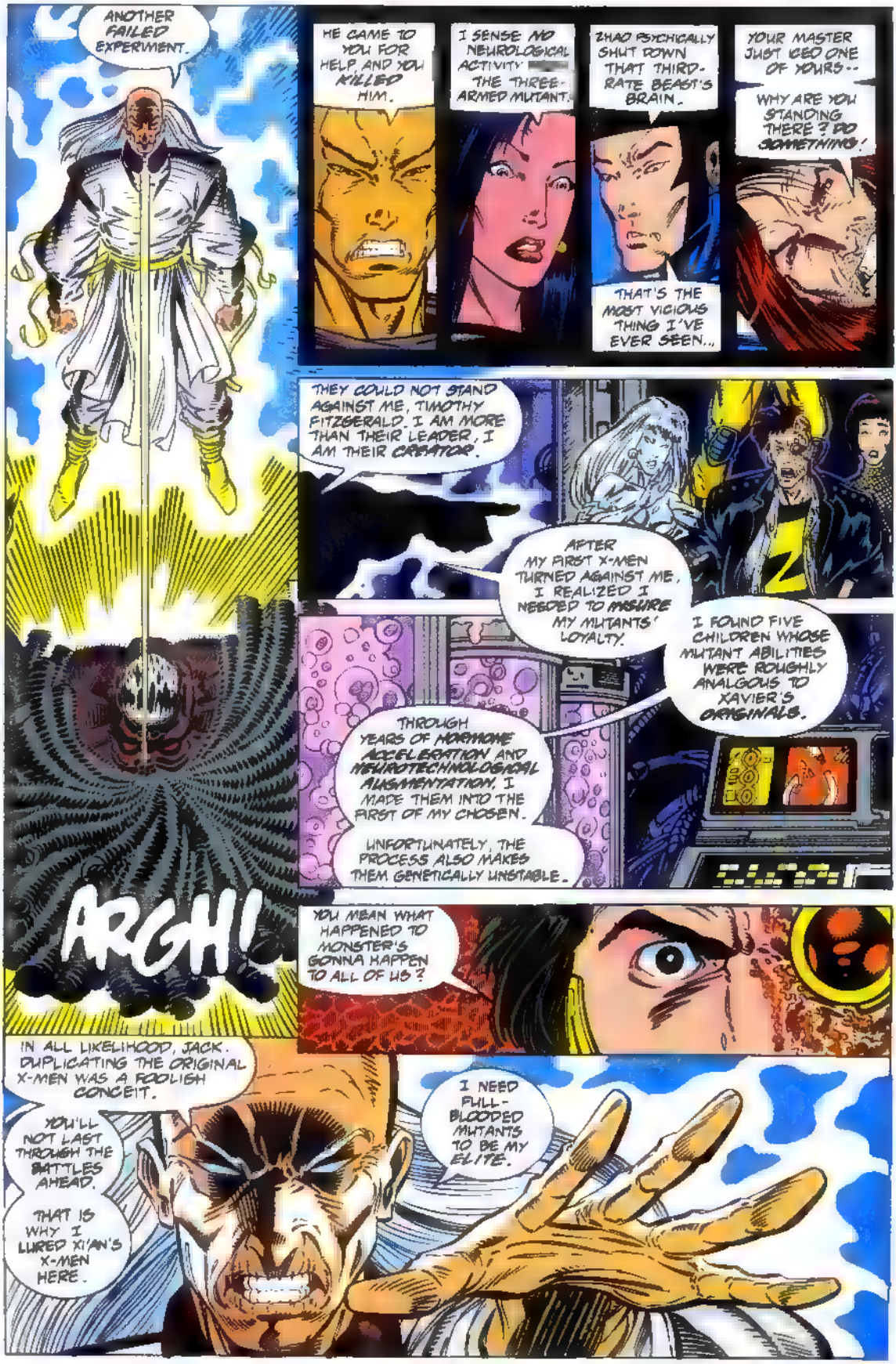
I'M HERE. WHAT DO YOU WANT?
I'M HURT. AFTER ALL I'VE DONE FOR YOU, TREATED YOU LIKE THE BROTHER I NEVER HAD.
A HUG I DIDN'T EXPECT, BUT AT LEAST A MILDLY WARM HELLO...
HELLO, LIEBOWITZ. NOW... WHAT DO YOU WANT?
YOU NEVER DID LEARN THE FINE ART OF SMALL TALK.
GET TO THE POINT.
OKAY. GOT SOME FRIENDS DOWN SOUTH WRESTLING WITH SOME MAJOR LEAGUE DEVELOPERS.
SAME OLD STORY. THE DEVELOPERS ARE TEARING UP THE LAND, AND STRONGARMING THE LOCALS.
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT HELP EVEN THE ODDS.
HOW FAR SOUTH? MEXICO?
A LITTLE FURTHER. ANTARTICA.
THE SAVAGE LAND.

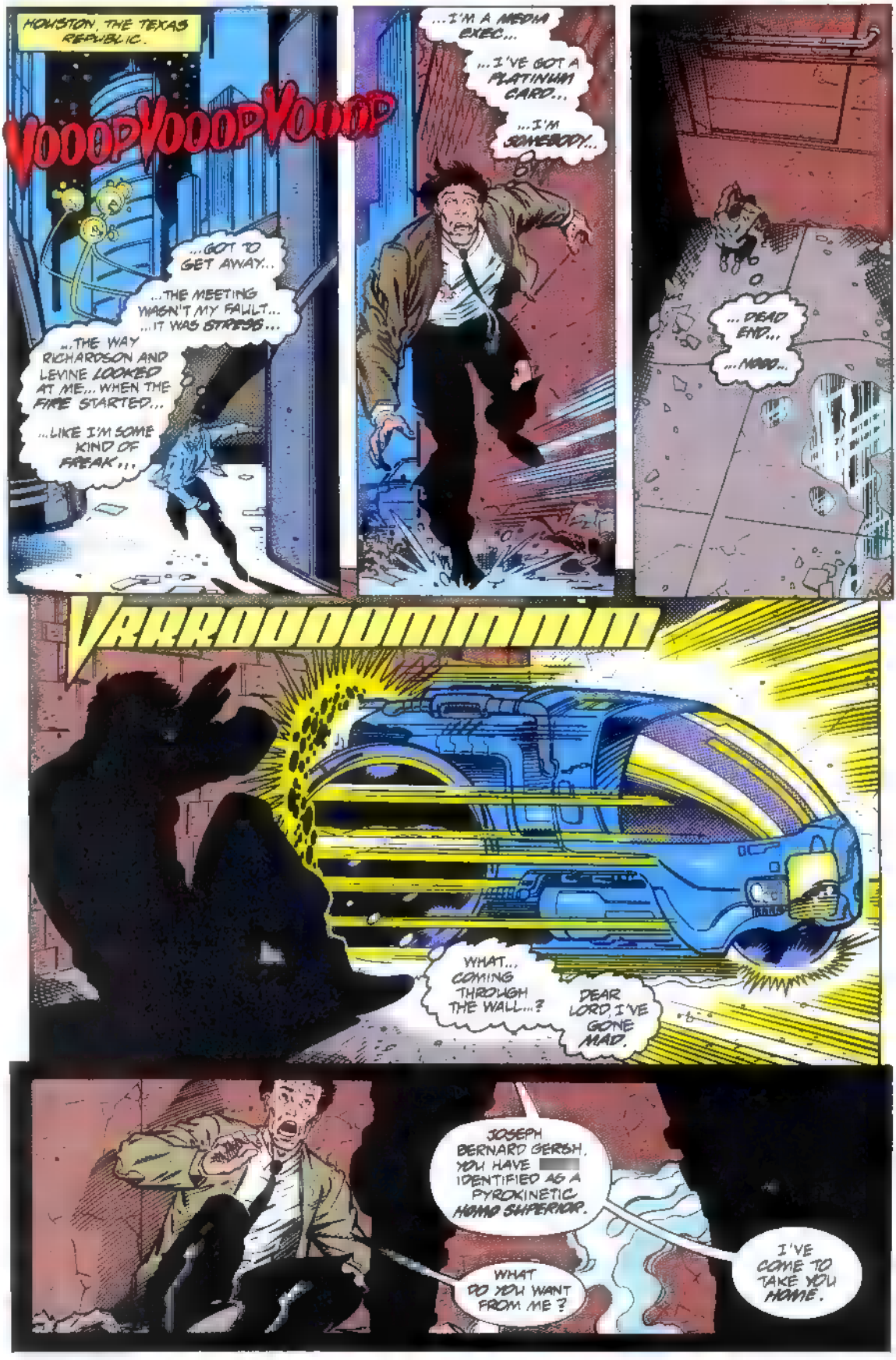
BACK AT ZHAO'S RANCH...
DO YOU THINK LOCKING US UP ON POWER DAMPENING PLATFORMS WOULD CONVINCE US TO JOIN YOU--
--OR DO YOU INTEND TO BLUDGEON US INTO SUBMISSION?
HARDLY WHAT I EXPECTED FROM A MAN NOTED FOR HIS SPIRITUAL ENLIGHTENMENT, ZHAO.
FORGET ABOUT THAT ZEN STUFF, XI'AN. THE FLOATING NIGHT LIGHT'S INTO VOODOO--
-- AND HE'S GONNA TURN US ALL INTO THE WALKING DEAD LIKE HE DID KRYS AND TEN EAGLES.
CAN'T STAND NOT MOVING.
WHILE I AM CERTAIN THE FOUR OF YOU WOULD EVENTUALLY SEE THE WISDOM OF MY CAUSE...
...I HAVE NEITHER THE TIME NOR THE PATIENCE TO WAIT FOR THAT MOMENT.
IT WON'T WORK, ZHAO. WE WILL RESIST YOU.
THE BRAVADO OF YOUTH COMES FROM ASSUMPTION.
YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND. YOU DON'T HAVE A CHOICE.
YOU ARE NOT HERE BY CHANCE. FATE BROUGHT YOU TO ME.

UNTIL KRYSTALIN AND TEN [redacted] BROKE INTO MY COMPOUND*, I [redacted] UNAWARE A NEW [redacted] OF MUTANTS NOW CLAIMED THE X-MEN MANTLE.
DESTINY HAD DELIVERED TO ME THE SOLUTION TO MY CURRENT PROBLEMS.
* LAST ISSUE -- JOEY
AFTER CONVINCING THE CRYSTOMORPH AND THE KEEWAZI OF THE JUSTNESS OF MY CAUSE--
-- THEY GLADLY CALLED YOU HERE.
THEY, TOO, RESISTED AT FIRST--
--AND SO I FOUND IT EXPEDIENT TO USE NEURAL IMPLANTS [redacted] DIMINISH THEIR RESER[redacted].
I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED STRONGLY IN THE [redacted] OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY TO MY WORK.
ZHAO. WHEN [redacted] FIRST MET, YOU SPOKE OF A HOLY WAR. SURELY YOU OF ALL PEOPLE KNOW IGNITING GENETIC DISCORD WILL ONLY DESTROY LIVES NEEDLESSLY. WASN'T THAT THE CORE OF WHAT YOU TAUGHT YOUR X-MEN ?
MY X-MEN
BETRAYED
ME !

THE LONG CORPORATE AND GENETIC CONFLAGRATIONS HAD DRAINED TOO MUCH OF MY ENERGY.
NO LONGER DID MY MINDFIRE BURN AS POWERFULLY AS IT ONCE DID.
I SECLUDED MYSELF IN THE LABORATORY, ATTEMPTING TO SYNTHESIZE A PSYCHO-ACTIVE AMPLIFIER THAT WOULD RESTORE MY POWER.
DURING THAT TIME OUTSIDE INFLUENCES CORRUPTED MY X-MEN, TURNING THEM AGAINST MY ILLUMINATED LEADERSHIP.
OH, THEY DID NOT CHALLENGE ME DIRECTLY. NO, THEY SOUGHT TO UNDERMINE ME WITH DECEPTION--FEIGNING CONCERN THAT MY PSYCHO-ACTIVITIES HAD AFFECTED MY REASON.
WITH GREAT REGRET, I WAS FORCED TO NEUTRALIZE MY TREACHEROUS BRETHREN.
YOU MEAN YOU KILLED THE LAST X-MEN?
YOU COLD HEARTED SON OF A--
THIS EXPLAINS WHY WE'VE FOUND NO RECORD OF ANY OF THOSE X-MEN PAST THE LOS ANGELES FIREFIGHTS...
DOESN'T TAKE A NEURO-PSYCH TO SEE THAT YOU ARE ONE PARANOID OLD MAN--
THOSE VITAMIN SUPPLEMENTS [redacted] COOKED UP HAVE DRIVEN [redacted] ABSOLUTELY OUT OF YOUR SKULL!
I AM NOT CRAZY!
CAREFUL TIM, KEEP HIM DISTRACTED BUT DON'T PUSH HIM TOO HARD.
ALL I NEED [redacted] ENOUGH TIME TO [redacted] THE DISRUPTIVE PROPERTIES OF MY LEFT HAND TO BREAK OUT OF THIS MANACLE.
MASTER, HELP ME...

MONSTER, I TOLD YOU AND THE OTHERS NOT TO DISTURB ME.
BUT... AM ON FIRE...
...PLEASE...
...MAKE IT STOP!
DO SOMETHING, ZHAO. CAN'T YOU SEE HE'S IN PAIN?
I'D HOPED TO AVOID THIS.
WINGSPAN, TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED.
ARGH!
WE WERE IN THE DANGER ROOM -- AS YOU REQUESTED -- THEN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIMROD SITUATION, MONSTER BEGAN SMOKING AND DOUBLED OVER...
I TRIED TO HELP HIM UP, BUT HIS SKIN WAS TOO HOT TO TOUCH.
EVEN FROSTBITE COULDN'T COOL HIM DOWN.
AS I FEARED...
YOUR BODY IS REJECTING THE ACCELERATED MUTATION TREATMENTS I DESIGNED.


ANOTHER FAILED EXPERIMENT.
HE CAME TO YOU FOR HELP, AND YOU KILLED HIM.
I SENSE NO NEUROLOGICAL ACTIVITY [redacted] THE THREE-ARMED MUTANT.
ZHAO PSYCHICALLY SHUT DOWN THAT THIRD-RATE BEAST'S BRAIN.
THAT'S THE MOST VICIOUS THING I'VE EVER SEEN..
YOUR MASTER JUST ATE ONE OF YOURS--
WHY ARE YOU STANDING THERE? DO SOMETHING!
THEY COULD NOT STAND AGAINST ME, TIMOTHY FITZGERALD. I AM MORE THAN THEIR LEADER, I AM THEIR CREATOR.
AFTER MY FIRST X-MEN TURNED AGAINST ME, I REALIZED I NEEDED TO ASSURE MY MUTANTS' LOYALTY.
I FOUND FIVE CHILDREN WHOSE MUTANT ABILITIES WERE ROUGHLY ANALGOUS TO XAVIER'S ORIGINALS.
THROUGH YEARS OF HORMONE ACCELERATION AND NEUROTECHNOLOGICAL ALIASMENTATION, I MADE THEM INTO THE FIRST OF MY CHOSEN.
UNFORTUNATELY, THE PROCESS ALSO MAKES THEM GENETICALLY UNSTABLE.
ARGH!
YOU MEAN WHAT HAPPENED TO MONSTER'S GONNA HAPPEN TO ALL OF US?
IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, JACK. DUPLICATING THE ORIGINAL X-MEN WAS A FOOLISH CONCEIT.
YOU'LL NOT LAST THROUGH THE BATTLES AHEAD.
THAT IS WHY I LURED XI'AN'S X-MEN HERE.
I NEED FULL-BLOODED MUTANTS TO BE MY ELITE.


HOUSTON, THE TEXAS REPUBLIC.
VOOOPVOOOPVOOOP
...GOT TO GET AWAY...
...THE MEETING WASN'T MY FAULT... ...IT WAS STRESS...
...THE WAY RICHARDSON AND LEVINE LOOKED AT ME... WHEN THE FIRE STARTED...
...LIKE I'M SOME KIND OF FREAK...
...I'M A MEDIA EXEC...
...I'VE GOT A PLATINUM CARD...
...I'M SOMEBODY...
...DEAD END...
...MMM...
VRRROOOOMMMMM
WHAT... COMING THROUGH THE WALL...?
DEAR LORD I'VE GONE MAD.
JOSEPH BERNARD GERSH, YOU HAVE [redacted] IDENTIFIED AS A PYROKINETIC HOMO SUPERIOR.
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?
I'VE COME TO TAKE YOU HOME.

HUNDREDS OF MILES FROM HOUSTON...
ZHAO, YOU WILL REGRET THIS.
I WILL NEVER FOLLOW YOU WILLINGLY.
WHEN THE CHILDREN OF THE ATOM ASSUME THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE AS LEADERS OF THIS WORLD--YOU WILL REGRET THESE MOMENTS OF FUTILE DEFIANCE, AND ACKNOWLEDGE MY VISION.
YOU WILL BE MY RIGHT HAND, XI'AN CHI XAN, AS WE BRING THE FLATSCAN CORPORATIONS TO THEIR KNEES.
KROCK
[redacted] KNOW SO LITTLE [redacted] THE TRUTH, BOY.
THE CORPORATIONS ARE RUN BY THE SAME INNER CIRCLE THAT RAN THE GOVERNMENT BEFORE THE CIVIL WARS.
I'M TALKING ABOUT THE SAME SHADOW CABINET THAT ORDERED THE PURGE OF MUTANTS OVER FIFTY YEARS AGO.
TELL ME MORE...
YOU ATTEMPT TO HUMOR ME AS YOU TRY TO ESCAPE.
TOO LATE. THIS NEURAL CHIP WILL BLOCK ANY RESISTANCE TO MY PSYCHIC PERSUASION.
PHUT
NNNNGHH..
KRAK
NOW I WILL ENTER YOUR MIND--
--AND IMPRINT MY WORD IN THE DEEPEST RECESSES OF YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS.

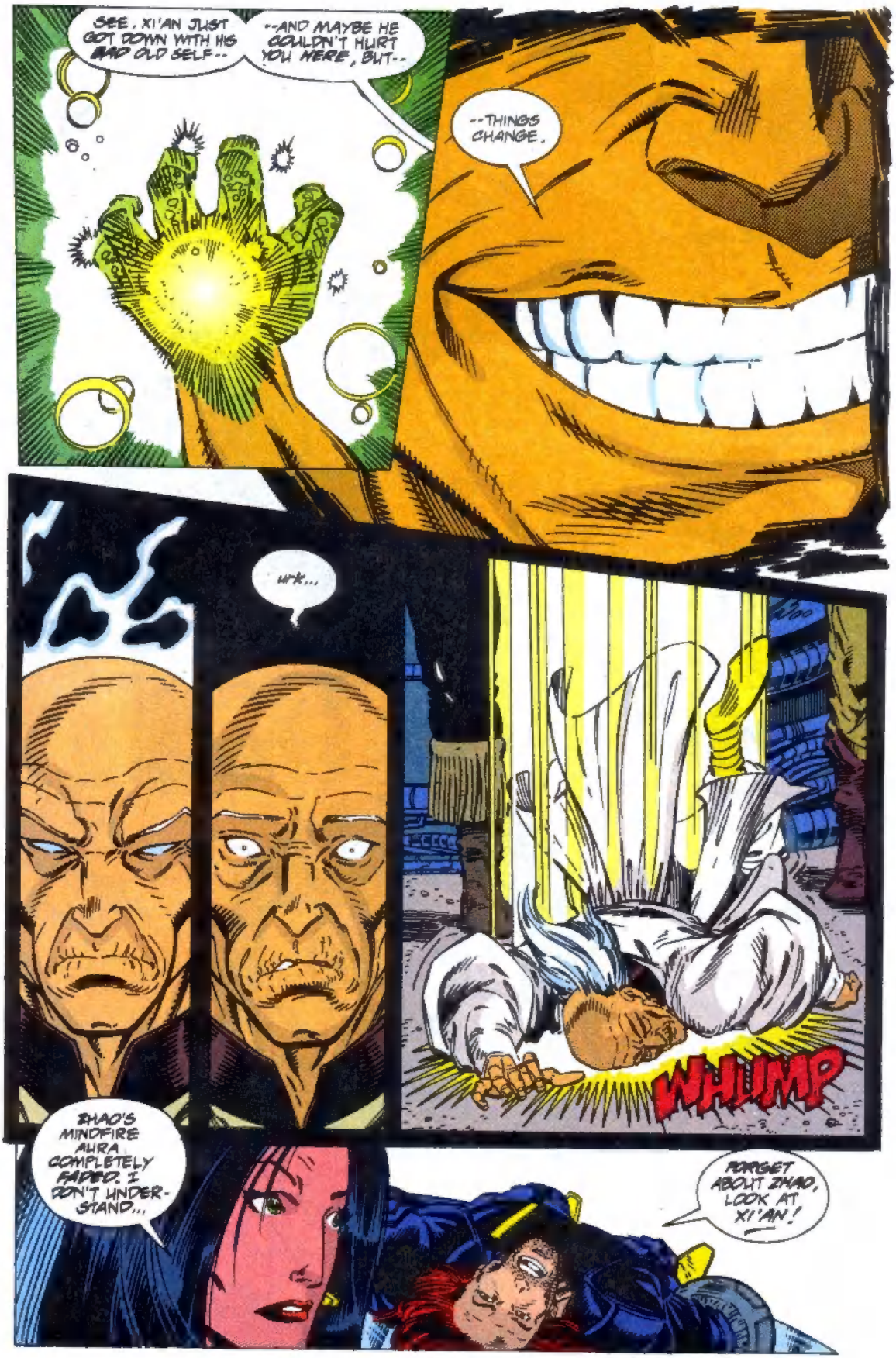
UNNNGH...
WHERE AM I...?
WHY HAVE I RETURNED TO THE PLACE WHE[redacted] I ALMOST DIED THREE YEARS AGO...?
OH, NO... I'M BACK IN SAIGON...
...IN THE AMUSEMENT PARK THEY BUILT FOR THE 2016 OLYMPICS...
...RIGHT AFTER THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY CHANGED THE CITY'S NAME BACK FROM HO CHI MINH CITY...
BUT I CAN'T BE HERE... I HAVEN'T BEEN IN VIETNAM SINCE...
...THE CARTEL PUT OUT A CONTRACT ON MY LIFE.
FACE ME, XI'AN!

ZHAO!
KRASH
HE'S HYPNOED MY MIND.
GET A GRIP, YOU SURVIVED SAIGON.
I'VE NEVER MET ANY TELEPATH THIS POWERFUL.
NONE OF THIS IS REAL. ZHAO'S USING MY OWN MEMORIES TO UNDERMINE MY RESISTANCE.
WAS XAVIER THIS STRONG?
CAN'T REST FOR A MOMENT. HIS MINDFIRE ASSAULT IS AS DEADLY HERE AS IT IS IN THE REAL WORLD--
--AND I'M EVEN MORE VULNERABLE.
YOU'VE NOWHERE TO RUN THAT MY MINDFIRE CAN'T REACH, XI'AN.
GOING IN CIRCLES? AN APT METAPHOR, DON'T YOU THINK?
GIVE IN.
CAN'T MAINTAIN MY GRIP.

UNNGH!!
YOU'RE A SORRY SIGHT.
WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT THE DESERT GHOST WOULD [redacted] TAKEN OUT BY [redacted] NORMHEAD?
I CAN HELP.
YOU!
NEVER!
YOU CAN'T RUN FROM THE TRUTH. YOU'RE LOSING BADLY.
PRETTY SOON, YOU'RE GOING TO BE AS VACANT AS KRYS AND TEN EAGLES, KISSING UP TO THAT CRAZY OLD MAN.
I DON'T NEED YOU!
ADMIT IT. I'M THE WILDFIRE THAT MADE YOU [redacted] --UNPREDICTABLE--
--I MADE YOU UNSTOPPABLE.
YOU'RE THE PART OF ME THAT DIDN'T CARE ABOUT ANYONE BUT HIMSELF.

THE CARTEL ALMOST KILLED YOU BECAUSE YOU TURNED YOUR BACK ON ME.
YOU NEED MY EDGE.
SURRENDER, XI'AN.
YOU'VE EXHAUSTED MY PATIENT GOOD NATURE.
ARGH!
THE TIME FOR MERCY IS PAST.
FEEL THE MINDFIRE BURN YOUR SOUL.
BEG MY FORGIVENESS BEFORE YOU'VE NOTHING LEFT INSIDE...
NO...
ALL YOUR HIGH IDEALS ARE NO GOOD TO YOU NOW.
YOU'VE LOST. YOU CAN'T BEAT THE OLD MAN--
--BUT I CAN.

DON'T ACT SO DEFEATED. ZHAO DIDN'T CHOOSE THE AMUSEMENT PARK FOR HIS BATTLEFIELD--
YOU DID BECAUSE YOU KNEW I'D BE HERE--
YOU WIN...
--BECAUSE YOU KNEW THAT SOONER OR LATER YOU'D HAVE TO LET ME BACK IN.
SEEMS LIKE OLD TIMES.
SORRY, OLD MAN. LOOKS LIKE THE PARK IS CLOSED.
THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE. YOU CANNOT BE STANDING.
MAYBE YOU'RE JUST SENILE--
WHY AREN'T YOU FALLING?
--OR MAYBE YOU JUST PICKED THE WRONG MIND TO MUCK WITH.


SEE, XI'AN JUST GOT DOWN WITH HIS MAD OLD SELF--
--AND MAYBE HE COULDN'T HURT YOU HERE, BUT--
--THINGS CHANGE.
urk...
WHUMP
ZHAO'S MINDFIRE AURA COMPLETELY FADED. I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
FORGET ABOUT ZHAO, LOOK AT XI'AN!

GOT TO GET OUT OF THESE CURSED RESTRAINTS.
NOBODY'S TYING ME DOWN EVER AGAIN.
STUPID OLD MAN.
HARD TO RULE THE WORLD WHEN YOU'RE BRAIN DEAD, ISN'T IT?
THUD NOT
XI'AN? ARE YOU ALRIGHT?
OH, YEAH...
...NEVER BEEN BETTER.
TO BE CONTINUED